

THE GIRL AT THE HALFWAY HOUSE

A STORY OF THE PLAINS
BY E. HOUGH, AUTHOR OF THE STORY OF THE COWBOY
Copyrighted, 1909, by D. Appleton & Company, New York

CHAPTER XV.—Continued.

In the swift current of humanity then streaming up and down the cattle range, the reputation of the Halfway House was carried far and near; and for fifty miles east and west, for five hundred miles north and south, the beauty of the girl at the Halfway House was matter of general story. About her there grew a saga of the cow range, and she was spoken of with awe from the Brazos to the Blue. Many a rude cowboy made long pilgrimage to verify rumors he had heard of the personal beauty, the personal sweetness of nature, the personal kindness of heart, and yet the personal reserve and dignity of this new goddess, whose like was not to be found in all the wide realms of the range.

For each of these rude, silent, awkward range riders, who stammered in all speech except to men or horses, and who stumbled in all locomotion but that of the saddle, Mary Ellen had a kind spot in her soul, never ceasing to wonder as she did at the customs and traditions of their life. Pain they knew not, fear they had not, and duty was their only god. They told her, simply as children, of deeds which now caused a shudder, now set tingling the full blood of enthusiasm, and opened up unconsciously to her view a rude field of knight-errantry, whose principles sat strangely close with the best traditions of her own earlier world and time. They were knights-errant, and for all on the Ellenville trail there was but one lady.

As for Edward Franklin himself, he could not in his moments of wildest egotism assign himself to a place any better than that accorded each member of the clans who rallied about this Southern lady transplanted to the Western plains. Repulsed in his first unskilled, impetuous advance; hurt, stung, cut to the quick as much at his own clumsiness and failure to make himself understood as at the actual

destroyed her people, and banished her in this far wandering from the land that bore her.

"Providence did not bring me here to marry you," she said to Franklin keenly, "but to tell you that I would never marry you—never, not even though I loved you, as I do not. I am still a Southerner, am still a rebel. Moreover, I have learned my lesson. I shall never love again."

Poor medicine as it is, work was ever the best salve known for a hurting heart. Franklin betook him to his daily work, and he saw success attend his labors. He felt growing in his heart the stubbornness of the man of property, the landholding man, the man who even unconsciously plans a home, resolved to cling to that which he has taken of the earth's surface for his own. He knew that this perverted time could not endure, knew that the sweep of American civilization must occupy all this land as it had all the lands from the Alleghenies to the plains. He foresaw in this crude new region the scene of a great material activity, a vast industrial development. It needed no great foresight to realize that all this land, now so wild and cheap, could not long remain wild and cheap, but must follow the history of values as it had been written up to the edge of that time and place.

Of law business of an actual sort there was next to none at Ellenville, all the transactions being in wild lands and wild cattle, but, as did all attorneys of the time, Franklin became broker before he grew to be professional man. Fortunate in securing the handling of the railroad lands, he sold block after block of wild land to the pushing men who came out to the "front" in search of farms and cattle ranches. His own profits he invested again in land. Thus he early found himself making much more than a live-

herds of the buffalo. The face of Nature was changing. The tremendous drama of the West was going on in all its giant action. This torrent of rude life, against which the hands of the law were still so weak and unavailing, had set for it in the ways of things a limit for its flood and a time for its receding.

The West was a noble country, and it asked of each man what nobility there was in his soul. Franklin began to grow. As he looked beyond the day of cattle and foresaw the time of the plough, so also he gazed far forward into the avenues of his own life, now opening more clearly before him. He rapidly forecast the possibilities of the profession which he had chosen, and with grim self-confidence felt them well within his power. Beyond that, then, he asked himself, in his curious self-questioning manner, what was there to be? Wherein was he to gain that calmness and that satisfaction which ought to attend each human soul, and entitle it to the words "Well done?" Odd enough were some of these self-searchings which went on betimes in the little office of this plainsman lawyer; and strangest of all to Franklin's mind was the feeling that, as his heart had not yet gained that which was its right, neither had his hand yet fallen upon that which it was to do.

Franklin rebelled from the technical side of the law, not so much by reason of its dry difficulty as through scorn of its admitted weakness, its inability to do more than compromise; through contempt of its pretended beneficence and its frequent inefficiency and harmfulness. In the law he saw plainly the lash of the taskmaster, driving all those yoked together in the horrid compact of society, a master inexorable, stone-faced, cruel. In it he found no comprehension, seeing that it regarded humanity either as a herd of slaves or a pack of wolves, and not as brethren laboring, suffering, performing a common destiny, yielding to a common fate. He saw in the law no actual recognition of the individual, but only the acknowledgment of the social body. Thus, set down in a day miraculously clear, placed among strong characters who had never yet yielded up their souls, witnessing that time which knew the last blaze of the spirit of men absolutely free, Franklin felt his own soul leap into a prayer for the continuance of that day. Seeing then that this might not be, he fell sometimes to the dreaming of what he might some day, if blessed by the pitying and understanding spirit of things, bring out these types, perpetuate these times, and so at last set them lovingly before a world which might at least wonder, though it did not understand. Such were his vague dreams, unformulated; but, happily, meantime he was not content merely to dream.

(To be continued.)



"I am still a Southerner—am still a rebel!"

rebuff received, Franklin none the less in time recovered sufficient equanimity to seek to avail himself of such advantages as still remained; and he resolved grimly that he would persist until at least he had been accepted as something better than a blundering boor. Under Major Buford's invitation he called now and again at the Halfway Ranch and the major was glad each time to see him. Mrs. Buford also received Franklin with pleasure, and Mary Ellen certainly always with politeness. Yet, fatal sign, Mary Ellen never ran for her mirror when she knew that Franklin was coming.

Of lovers Mary Ellen would hear of none, and this was Franklin's sole consolation. Yet all day as he labored there was present in his subconsciousness the personality of this proud and sweet-faced girl. Her name was spelled large upon the sky, was voiced by all the birds. It was indeed her face that looked up from the printed page. He dared not hope, and yet shrank from the thought that he must not, knowing what lethargy must else engulf his soul. He heard so clearly the sweet, imperious summons which is the second command put upon animate nature: First to prevail, to live; second, to love, to survive. As tree whispers unto tree, as flower yearns to flower, so came the mandate to his being in that undying speech that knows no change from the beginning to the end of time.

Against this overwhelming desire of an impetuous love there was raised but one barrier—the enduring resistance of a woman's will, silent, not strenuous, unprotesting, but unchanged. To all his renewed pleadings the girl simply said that she had no heart to give, that her hope of happiness lay buried on the field of Lousburg, in the far-off land that she had known in younger and less troubled days. Leaving that land, orphaned, penniless, her life crushed down at the very portal of womanhood, her friends scattered, her family broken and destroyed, her whole world overturned, she had left also all hope of a later happiness. There remained to her only the memory of a past, the honor that she prized, the traditions which she must maintain. She was "unreconstructed," as she admitted bitterly. Moreover, so she said, even could it lie in her heart ever to prove unfaithful to her lover who had died upon the field of duty, never could it happen that she would care for one of those who had murdered him, who had murdered her happiness, who had ruined her home,

libhood and laying the foundation of later fortune. Long since he had "proved up" his claim and moved into town permanently, having office and residence in the great depot hotel which was the citadel of the forces of law and order, of progress and civilization in that land.

The railroad company which founded Ellenville had within its board of directors a so-called "Land and Improvement Company," which latter company naturally had the first knowledge of the proposed location of the different towns along the advancing line. When the sale of town lots was thrown open to the public, it was always discovered that the Land and Improvement Company had already secured the best of the property in what was to be the business portion of the town. In the case of Ellenville, this inner corporation knew that there was to be located here a railroad division point, where ultimately there would be car shops and a long pay roll of employees. Such a town was sure to prosper much more than one depending solely upon agriculture for its support, as was to be the later history of many or most of these far Western towns. Franklin, given a hint by a friendly official, invested as he was able in town property in the village of Ellenville, in which truly it required the eye of faith to see any prospect of great enhancement. Betimes he became owner of a quarter-section of land here and there. In course of commissions on scales. He was careful to take only such land as he had personally seen and thought fit for farming, and always he secured land as near to the railroad as was possible. Thus he was in the ranks of those foreseeing men who quietly and rapidly were making plans which were later to place them among those high in the control of affairs.

Everywhere was shown the Anglo-Saxon love of land. Each man had his quarter-section or more. Even Nora, the waitress at the hotel, had "died on a quarter," and once in perhaps a month or so would "reside" there overnight, a few faint furrows in the soil (done by her devoted admirer, Sam) passing as those legal "improvements" which should later give her title to a portion of the earth. The land was passing into severalty, coming into the hands of the people who had subdued it, who had driven out those who once had been its occupants. The Indians were now cleared away, not only about Ellenville but far to the north and west. The skin-hunters had wiped out the last of the great

PARIS SLEUTHS WERE SLY.

Convinced Russia's Emperor That They Were Awake and Active.

The Paris correspondent of London Truth tells this story of the manner in which the Russian government tested the efficiency of the French detective police when the czar was about to visit Paris. The chief of the Russian police went secretly to the French capital, with orders to lie quietly in a hotel and only to report himself at the embassy after a stay of a week. But he had not been three hours in Paris before the prefect of police learned of his arrival from a French detective. At St. Petersburg they thought this a satisfactory result, and the imperial pair ventured to go to Paris and drive down the Champs Elysees without cavalry around their carriage.

A similar test applied in Rome had different consequences. The head of the Russian police remained there for a whole week without his arrival being suspected. On the evening of the sixth day he called on Count Neldoff to report himself, to the great astonishment of that ambassador. They both agreed that if the Roman police had not scented out the head of the greatest police force in the world they could not be depended upon to know much about the goings on of anarchists and nihilists. This is alleged to be the true reason why the czar declined to trust himself in the king of Italy's dominions.

Pharaoh's Treasures.

While studying in the British Museum a papyrus which was published 4,000 years before Christ, an Egyptologist recently found a clear and concise account of the treasures which the ancient sovereigns of Egypt buried in various parts of the Libyan desert, and now an expedition is being formed in London for the purpose of searching for this wealth. The necessary funds have already been secured and in a short time a few skilled explorers will start for the desert, where the technical work will be prosecuted under the supervision of Messrs. Lake and Currie, two English engineers. The writer of the ancient papyrus says that the Pharaohs hid an immense quantity of gold and precious stones in the region which is known by the name of the "Valley of Kings," and there the first excavations will be made. The task will not be easy since the country to be searched extends over 40,000 square leagues.

Miniature Typewriter.

The smallest typewriter ever manufactured was made in America fourteen years ago. It was four inches by three inches and weighed four and a half ounces.

Trades Unions Grow.

Unionism in the United States has grown in nine years from 900,000 to 2,000,000.

LIVE STOCK

Some Feeding Points.

In an Oklahoma bulletin we find the following conclusions on the value of various substances for feeding: Where corn can be raised with reasonable certainty of a good crop it will be found the best fattening food. Its fodder and stover are also valuable foods, although the long time after ripening before winter feeding begins causes more loss in the shock and much more to the standing stalks than in more northern states. As the kernels become very hard when thoroughly dried, grinding the corn is a help; soaking is a fair substitute for this. Where hogs follow cattle there is little loss when either ear or shelled corn is fed. Kafir corn is a healthy, palatable and nutritious food, but its feeding value is somewhat less than that of corn. As shown both by feed lot trials and by digestion experiments there is a great loss in feeding this grain unthreshed to cattle—in some cases of sixty per cent but hogs will utilize most of this waste. There is little difference in the waste whether the grain is fed unthreshed or thrashed. In some cases, at least, the loss is greater when soaked grain is fed than when it is fed dry. In some trials steers fed Kafir meal made better gains for a long time than did those fed corn meal, but this was not true in any extended period. Hogs digest the unground grain better than do cattle. In general hogs have made gains from four-fifths to five-sixths as great when fed on Kafir as when fed corn. Sheep seem to digest Kafir better than any other class of farm animals. Kafir stover apparently has practically the same feeding value as corn stover and often is in better condition. Running the entire stalk through a thrashing machine puts the stover in excellent condition. Alfalfa is the best hay for either horses, cattle or sheep and is a help to hogs during winter.

Live Stock Husbandry.

One of the important foundation stones of agriculture is live stock husbandry. By many this is believed to be the most profitable branch of farming. Some practice, the feeding of all they grow to live stock raised on their farms. Certain it is that the nation that tries to farm without live stock runs the chance of impoverishing its lands. This has sent more than one nation into decay. Still, to raise live stock successfully one must have a good brain and lack laziness. There are some farmers that hold to grain growing because they have to work only a few months out of the year and have the balance of the time in which to rest. Such men are blamed sometimes because they do not go into stockraising in addition to grain-raising. The probability is that if they did go into the raising of stock they would neglect it and so lose money. By bad methods it is easy to lose money rapidly in stock-raising. Every man that is willing to study his work and has had experience in the general work of farming can go into the business of breeding and feeding farm animals with good chances of success; but before taking such a step the full cost should be counted.

The Unbalanced Ration.

The fact should not be overlooked that there are cases where the balanced ration is not the most economical. This will be influenced by the relative market price of feeds and the animals that are to be fed. For instance if corn is very cheap the feeder will not be justified in paying high prices for mill stuff to feed in very large quantities to fattening steers, unless it be for the finishing period. The carbohydrates that he would waste are too cheap in 15 cent corn to justify him in buying high priced protein to save them. But generally, feed containing enough protein at a reasonable price can be had on the farm at a price that will justify an approximate balanced ration in the majority of cases. Besides the loss of food nutrients, there are detrimental results caused by an unbalanced ration. Growing stock are stunted; dairy cows are dried up, in breeding stock the animal system is weakened, etc. For such cases as these the balanced ration will pay even if it is necessary to purchase such feeds as oil meal, etc., that are generally considered high priced.—F. C. Curtis.

The Present Stock Feeder.

There was a time when the feeding of live stock could be carried on in an ignorant and haphazard way and yet afford the feeder a profit. That was in the days when land was cheap and there was little market for grain, chiefly because it could not be hauled to where it was needed. That day has passed, and both land and grain are in demand and showing a strong tendency to rise still higher. The haphazard feeder long ago went out of the business on account of non-success. The successful stock feeder of the present day is able to discriminate between good and poor animals and to tell the difference between good and poor feeds. He is able to sit down and combine a ration that will give the best possible results. He no longer believes that one kind of hay is worth as much as another kind. And how came he to know these things? By taking heed to the work done by the scientist in the analysis of the different feeds. The first-class feeder of cattle no longer believes that timothy hay is the very best hay for beef making. He has learned that clover and alfalfa far exceed it in value.

HORTICULTURE

Value of Style in Fruit.

Benjamin Newhall, a Chicago fruit commission merchant, in a paper contributed to the last session of the Illinois state horticulturists, said:

Quality pays; style pays still better; and both together best of all. You growers know this, but probably you dealers realize it even more fully. For instance, recently we received a carload of apples most of which sold at \$9 per barrel, but in that car were some that sold at \$1.50 per barrel. Both were called No. 1, but the \$9 apples were high in flavor and color, and perfect as to shape, put up in an attractive package and finely packed. The \$1.50 apples were round, but were dull and uninviting in color, of poor flavor and put up in a slovenly looking package and were poorly packed.

We sold Seckel pears at \$3 and \$2 per barrel full price on the same day, and we got full price on both. It was quality and style that made the difference. Not once, but many times we have sold Jonathans, sound and freshly received the same day at \$2 and \$10 per barrel. In fact, this very thing is one of the chief annoyances of our trade. Few shippers realize the value of just a little Nature's tinting on the skin of an apple or how slight a difference in this line will mean a difference of from 50 cents to \$1.00 per barrel in the price.

"You say you sold John Jones apples at \$5 straight and for mine you got only \$4, both packed by the same man on the same day, the orchards within a mile of each other. How is this?" What a hopeless task to reply to such a question! "My apples were just as good as his, just as large, just as smooth, just as carefully packed, with just as good cooperage." All this is true, my friend, but they were worth \$1.00 per barrel less in our market just the same and are harder to sell at the difference. And why? It is excellence set off by style. That is why the fruit from sunny valleys of the far west outsells the best selections of the middle west. It may not have more intrinsic merit, but it has style.

Quality pays. Choose your varieties wisely; take pains with your orchard treatment. Study the market needs; but above all cultivate style in fruit packing and package, and when to this style you add quality, you have a combination that will sell your fruit at prices that will often surprise you.

Forest Regeneration.

The object of forestry is to utilize to the fullest possible extent the product of forest land, and at the same time to maintain the conditions which render forests beneficial, says a report of the Rhode Island station. Utilizing the timber is as much a part of forest management as is inducing the growth of trees and protecting them during their growth. The important consideration of how to replace the trees when cut is known as forest regeneration. Two methods are available, the artificial and the natural. Artificial regeneration may be by means of seeds sown and covered by hand or by means of planting trees. Both these methods are too expensive to be used except where no others will succeed. Manifestly on the open prairies they are the only methods available when forests are to be started on land where no trees now grow. Natural regeneration is the more common method, and the one more practicable under normal forest conditions. It may be by means of shoots or by means of seeds. The former utilizes the vigorous shoots which spring up when most broad-leaved trees are cut. The resulting growth is known in forest literature as coppice. The method cannot be used with conifers, and not all broad-leaved trees can be depended upon to send up satisfactory shoots. Such shoots make a more rapid growth in their earlier years than seedling trees, but they generally attain their best development within thirty years and are not suitable for the production of large, long-lived trees. Coppice growth, therefore, is adapted only to short rotations and the production of such classes of timber as basket material, firewood, fence posts, telegraph poles, hop-poles, etc. In the regeneration of forests by seeds nature is again ready to help, for she contrives many ways in which seeds are scattered that they may find places to grow. The wind is ever ready to carry them, and naturally the trees which become most widely scattered are those bearing light seeds with some kind of appendage enabling them to be easily carried by the wind.

The English "Crab."

A recent report of the Virginia station says: "This variety is only a small form of the common apple. Tree hardy but a slow grower; upright, forming a roundish head. Trunk measures 1 3/4 inches at base and about 11 inches at head. Planted in 1891. Thus far has not shown susceptibility to disease. First bloom noted in 1895, and trees bore a small crop that year. Small crops produced again in 1897, 1899 and 1901. At no time has this variety borne a heavy crop. Fruit larger than ordinary crabs, dull red in color and of excellent quality for eating out of hand. This is a winter variety and will keep till January if storage conditions are favorable. It has value for amateurs, but we do not recommend it for general planting.

A woman will always boil over if her husband will refrain from getting hot when she begins to roast him.

Tin Ore in the Transvaal.

It is reported from Johannesburg that a new and unexpected source of wealth has been discovered in the territory of the late Boer republic. Near the eastern border of the Transvaal, on the ledge of the lofty South African plateau, three valuable lodes of tin ore have been found, and the deposits are apparently so extensive that productions are heard that the new colony may prove to be as rich in tin and copper as it is already known to be in gold.

No Chromos or cheap premiums.

but a better quality and one-third more of Defiance Starch for the same price of other starches.

American Apples in Germany.

Last year witnessed a great increase in the imports of American apples into Germany. For the first eight months of 1903 the imports were 3,696 metric tons of 2,204 pounds each, against 214 tons and 543 tons during the same months in 1902 and 1901. Of American dried fruit, baked and simply preserved, the German imports for the same period were 25,251 tons, against 11,981 and 12,060 tons, respectively, in 1902 and 1901.

PUTNAM FADELESS DYES color Silk, Wool and Cotton at one boiling.

Fatal British Climate and Cooking.

The climate of England kills half the population, according to London Truth, the cooking kills the rest. Throughout the world, wherever there is the sun or a spring, there are English men and women endeavoring to repair their constitutions. The medicine bill of the English people—together with its accompanying expenses—is sufficiently large to support a second-rate power and does mainly support many large and small towns on the Continent and elsewhere.

The Wonderful Cream Separator.

Does its work in thirty minutes and leaves less than 1 per cent butter fat. The price is ridiculously low, according to size, \$2.75 to \$6.00 each, and when you have one you would not part therewith for fifty times its cost.

JUST SEND THIS NOTICE

with 5c stamps for postage to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and get their big catalog, fully describing this remarkable Cream Separator, and hundreds of other tools and farm seeds used by the farmer. (W. N. U.)

The easiest way to outwit a liar is to tell the truth.

Story of a Missionary.

A capital story has been told by an American missionary who has just arrived in London from Korea. The difficulty in learning the language of that country is increased enormously owing to the large number of words which, with a slight inflection of the voice, are used over and over again with an entirely different meaning. The missionary in question was preaching to some natives, and assuring them that unless they repented they would go to a place of punishment. Amazement rather than terror was written on the faces of his oriental listeners. Why on earth, if they rejected, his advice and refused to repent, should they be dispatched—to the local postoffice? On another occasion a lecture was delivered, in the course of which a beautiful moral was being drawn from the gay career of the tiny butterfly which was suddenly cut short in the clutches of the spider. The smile, however, fell somewhat short of its intended meaning, and it was not until the laughter had subsided that the lecturer became aware that the victim which had been floundering amid the dainty silken threads of the web was a donkey, which in the Korean language, it appears, is synonymous with butterfly.

Even the silk-covered umbrella has its ups and downs.

DIDN'T BELIEVE

That Coffee Was the Real Trouble.

Some people flounder around and take everything that's recommended to them but finally find out that coffee is the real cause of their troubles. An Oregon man says:

"For 25 years I was troubled with my stomach. I was a steady coffee drinker but didn't suspect that as the cause. I doctored with good doctors and got no help, then I took almost anything which someone else had been cured with but to no good. I was very bad last summer and could not work at times.

"On December 2, 1902, I was taken so bad the Doctor said I could not live over twenty-four hours at the most and I made all preparations to die. I could hardly eat anything, everything distressed me as I was weak and sick all over. When in that condition coffee was abandoned and I was put on Postum, the change in my feelings came quickly after the drink that was poisoning me was removed.

"The pain and sickness fell away from me and I began to get well day by day so I stuck to it until now I am well and strong again, can eat heartily with no headache, heart trouble or the awful sickness of the old coffee days. I drink all I wish of Postum without any harm and enjoy it immensely.

"This seems like a wonderfully strong story but I would refer you to the First National Bank, The Trust Banking Co., or any merchant of Grant's Pass, Ore., in regard to my standing and I will send a sworn statement of this if you wish. You can also use my name." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Still there are many who persistently fool themselves by saying "Coffee don't hurt me," a ten days' trial of Postum in its place will tell the truth and many times save life.

"There's a reason."

Look for the little book "The Road to Wellville" in each package.